

## **MEETING MINUTES (PAC #6A)**

**Meeting:** Project Advisory Committee (PAC) Meeting #6A

**Project: Como Regional Park Transportation Implementation Plan** 

Meeting Location: Polar Bear Odyssey Lodge, Como Zoo

Meeting Date/Time: July 12, 2010

**Attendees:** Michelle Furrer, Como Park Campus Manager

Tom Annunziata, Putt'er There Mini Golf

Glenn Baron, Como Town Triesta Brown, District 6

Don Ganje, St. Paul Parks and Recreation

Steve Grans, Minnesota State Fair Samantha Henningson, City of St. Paul

Karin Misiewicz, St. Paul Parks and Recreation Bryan Murphy, St. Paul Parks and Recreation

Ann Olson, St. Paul Ward 5 Dennis O'Rourke, District 10

Paul Prior, St. Paul Parks and Recreation

Jackie Sticha, Como Friends

Elizabeth Stiffler, St. Paul Public Works

Mary Wawro, District 6 (alternate) Sally Worku, District 10 (alternate)

Jon Horn, Kimley-Horn

JoNette Kuhnau, Kimley-Horn Jessica Laabs, Kimley-Horn

Action items appear in **bold italics** and are also summarized at the end of the minutes.

## 1. General Items

Jon Horn opened the meeting and requested comments/questions/changes on the meeting minutes for PAC Meeting #5. Comments received via email were incorporated. No additional comments were provided by the PAC.

In addition, Jon noted that some questions arose out of the materials that were sent out in advance of the PAC meeting. In the interest of transparency and timeliness, Kimley-Horn strives to send out information as it becomes available, and doesn't always have the

opportunity to explain exactly how the information was generated before it is sent out. We rely on PAC meetings to further explain details, and for PAC members to ask questions. While questions and comments are welcome at any time, Jon reminded attendees that the PAC meetings are the best forum for asking questions so the entire group may benefit from the response.

As part of the questions/reports from PAC members, District 10 poised the following questions:

- How much parking for personal vehicles are we shooting for?
- What is the capacity of Como Park?
- How do we control capacity?

There was some discussion about turnover rates, and the capacity of different areas of the park or campus, including trails and sidewalks. Sally Worku shared that she has heard of similar facilities staggering the entering and exiting of visitors to control capacity and enhance the visitor experience.

Michelle Furrer noted that changes to the park have mostly been upgrades or enhancements of existing facilities; it is not planned to add additional facilities or exhibits but rather to replace or enhance the existing facilities and exhibits such as the Pool and the African Hoofed Stock exhibit. She also noted there is a baseline or equilibrium that takes place; attendance may spike right after a new exhibit is implemented, but there is an ebb and flow over time

PAC members are interested in numeric calculations of capacity if possible. It was noted that capacity is not part of the scope of this project for the transportation plan. The task of the project has been to determine transportation needs for the present and future planned changes for the park. The topic is noted and *Michelle and Kimley-Horn will look into capacity as how it relates to the TIP and past studies*.

The question was also raised of why the intersection of Midway and Hamline was not included in the graphic of priority intersections (red dots). JoNette Kuhnau indicated that this was not an intersection that was previously raised as problematic, but it will be included as part of the roadway issues moving forward.

#### 2. Public Involvement

Jessica Laabs noted that survey data has been compiled by Como Park for the Como Town surveys, and results from separate surveys conducted by District 10 have also been received.

The public open house will be held August 12, 2010. Jessica distributed an outline of the proposed presentation and briefly summarized the open house format. *PAC members were asked to review the outline and come prepared to talk about it at the PAC meeting on July 19<sup>th</sup>.* A brief discussion about how the open house will be advertised was also conducted. Some feel that mailings are not very effective, and asked about an insert in the Midway Monitor. *Michelle will check into the cost effectiveness of a postcard mailing* 

compared with a newspaper insert. It was suggested that members of committees from previous studies in the park be sent notice of the open house. Signs within the park and neighborhood were also discussed as a possible way of advertising the open house.

The open house presentation will be videotaped and available on the website after the open house. Comment sheets will also be available on the website so those who cannot attend the open house can have the opportunity to review the materials and make comments. Comments will be received through the end of August.

It was also noted that Kimley-Horn has consulted with St. Paul Public Works and St. Paul Parks Managers regarding the project. District Council representatives prefer that a meeting be held with them prior to the draft report and recommendations, but after the open house. It was noted that even if these District Council meetings are open to district residents, PAC members still need to encourage people to attend the open house on August 12<sup>th</sup>.

## 3. Data Collection and Inventory

JoNette Kuhnau summarized the traffic and parking counts that took place within the park on Thursday, June 24 and Saturday, June 26. It was noted that parking counts were taken on these days, and the traffic counts took place both Saturday, June 26 and Sunday, June 27.

The findings that JoNette shared included:

- On the weekday, there was a peak in traffic from 7-10AM which dropped off, followed by steadily increasing traffic through 4-6PM before dropping off.
- On the weekend, peak was around 10-11AM and stayed high until dropping off around 6PM.
- Midway Parkway counts were higher on the weekend compared with the weekday counts. All other locations had higher traffic volumes during the weekdays.
- The maximum number of parked vehicles counted at any time point occurred at 1:30PM on Saturday and totaled 1,502 parked vehicles. This represents approximately 70% of the total parking capacity of the park, which is 2,188 spaces.

There was some opinion that the weather was "bad" on the day of the counts, and that the parking counts near McMurray were not representative of an event in progress. According to park records, attendance was average for a Saturday in June. Karin Misiewicz and Paul Prior will provide permit and activity records for June 24 and June 26 so that information may be documented as assumptions in the data summary.

#### 4. Develop Transportation Strategies

The brainstorming activity was continued from the previous PAC meeting, and began with finishing the Pedestrian/Bicycle brainstorm, and continued to Transit/Shuttles. The results of the brainstorming activity are listed in an attachment to these minutes. Several notes and action items were generated from the brainstorming, as follows:

- JoNette shared her conversation with Metro Transit, which revealed that a previous bus route on Lexington was eliminated several years ago due to budget cuts and low ridership.
- Kimley-Horn will outline potential scenarios for paid parking.
- Kimley-Horn will investigate other similar parks/zoos and how they deal with parking.

PAC members asked for additional information on the shuttle, which was provided by Michelle and summarized below:

- Capacity 28 seats/43 riders (using handles to stand)
- Through July 1 14,000 riders (4.8% of all visitors)
- Capture rate is 4.5-5% overall, 2.5% on weekdays
- Highest ridership this year 1,284 (8.9% capture rate) May 22<sup>nd</sup>
- Route is different than last year up Horton to Estabrook and drop off
- 3 buses on weekends, 2 on Friday, 1 bus Monday Thursday
- First bus fills at 10:30 to 10:45AM
- Another bus will be added in August
- 5<sup>th</sup> bus to be added at end of next year
- Contracted through 2010 with State Fair, looking for long-term recommendations for sites
- City budget \$150,000 for shuttle
- Shuttle lot holds 550 cars lot turns over every 2.5-3 hours

Due to time constraints, the brainstorming was not completed for Signing/Wayfinding and Facilities issues; discussion of these topics will be at the next PAC meeting. The discussion of evaluation criteria and more detailed discussion of roadway and parking concepts were also reserved for the next PAC meeting.

### 5. Future meeting times, dates, location

- PAC #6B July 19, 2010, 3:30PM to 5:30PM, Polar Bear Odyssey Lodge
- PAC #7 August 2, 2010, 3:30PM to 5:30PM, location TBD

Specific action items for individual PAC members and consultant staff are summarized on the next page.

# **Action Items/Homework (Open Items)**

ACTION ITEM	RESPONSIBLE	TIMELINE/
TIOTOT TIEN	PARTY	STATUS
Continue to follow up with groups regarding	All PAC members	Ongoing
feedback on issues.		
Collect any existing data/studies that may be	All PAC members	Ongoing
helpful		
PAC #3		
Reach out to other stakeholders as identified in	Furrer/Laabs	Ongoing
PAC #2, and also including bicycle groups and		
disabled/elderly populations.		
PAC #5		
Provide the Como Shuttle signing plan.	Stiffler	Prior to next PAC
Provide data on the number of rounds at Como	Ganje	Prior to next PAC
Golf Course in recent years.		
Inventory bike parking and add to the parking	Kuhnau	Prior to next PAC
inventory map.		
Review draft evaluation criteria.	All PAC members	Prior to next PAC
PAC #6A		
Look into capacity as how it relates to the TIP	Furrer/KHA	Prior to next PAC
and past studies.		
Review open house outline.	All PAC members	Prior to next PAC
Check into the cost-effectiveness of a postcard	Furrer	ASAP
mailing vs. a newspaper insert.		
Provide permit and activity records for June 24	Misiewicz	Prior to next PAC
and June 26 so that information may be	Prior	
documented as assumptions in the data summary.		
Outline potential scenarios for paid parking.	KHA	Prior to August 2
Investigate other similar facilities in terms of	KHA	Prior to August 2
how they handle parking.		